

Aeris

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Summary: Aeris lived a long time before she met up with Cloud. Let's take a trip back to her school days...

Aeris

Aeris sat at the table in her "mother's" home. Her dark hair circled her face in an angelic way. She had always known she was different... Why did they torture her about it? Why? She wasn't some kind of freak show. She was a normal 13 year old girl. Maybe she wasn't perfectly normal, but she sure was rather close.

There was a knock at the door. Aeris bit her lip. It was probably one of the kids in her class... They loved to bother her. Throwing things at her was one of their favorite activities. Aeris stood uneasily and walked to the door. She stood on her tip toes to look through the peep hole. "Ugh." she thought. It was Arthur Margells. He was the most popular and biggest bully in school.

Aeris slowly unlocked the door and opened it a crack. Arthur stood there patiently. He didn't appear to be armed with anything. She opened the door a little wider. Arthur had a huge smile on his usually smirking face...

"Aeris?" Arthur mumbled.

"Yes?" Aeris was afraid of what might come next.

"Uh..." Arthur shuffled his feet, "Would you come to the dance with me?"

Aeris was shocked. She fiddled with the strings on her apron nervously, "Of course I will." she managed to suppress her excitement.

Arthur's grin widened, "Great! I'll meet you by the church at seven."

Aeris smiled, "Okay... I'll be there."

"Bye!" Arthur called as he walked from Aeris' doorstep.

"Bye..." Aeris breathed. She had never been to one of her middle school's dances. She was afraid of what her classmates might do to her there.

Aeris' mother walked down the stairs, "Who was that?" she asked nonchalantly.

"It was Arthur Margells, from school... He asked me to the spring dance..." Aeris grinned.

Mother smiled and held her arms wide open.

Aeris and Mother embraced. Aeris then giggled and escaped up to her room. She didn't know what to wear... She was nervous about the whole idea of being invited to a dance by the most popular boy in school.

The next day at school, no one made fun of Aeris. They treated her especially nicely. They were so nice it made her cautious. Aeris just went along with it. She preferred to be accepted anyway.

That evening Aeris took her long brown hair out of its usual braid. She brushed it and tied a silk lilac ribbon in it. She put on the little lilac sweater and skirt that Mother had made her as a birthday gift that year. She smiled when she looked at herself in the mirror. She was transformed from beast to beauty.

The bell rang seven times. Aeris sat alone on the steps of the church. Seven fifteen. Still no Arthur. Aeris waited forty-five minutes for him to show. No one appeared. He stood her up. He just wanted to embarrass her. No one had seen it, but it was still embarrassing. Aeris broke down in tears. She tore the purple ribbons from her hair as she ran down the dirty slum street. She tripped over an empty soda can and fell to the ground. She stayed there. She felt like the dirt under her... Her hose had ripped, her skirt was muddy. Life was not fun for Aeris...

The next day was terrible. Arthur had showed up at the dance with another girl. He had also taken a few pictures of Aeris sitting on the church steps before he went to the dance. She looked beautiful, but no one noticed. No one cared. She was a weirdo in their eyes.

Aeris sat alone on her bed. She held the materia orb in her hand... It's white glossy surface felt good in her cold hands. The materia always made her feel safe and sound. It was like her real mother was with her. It was like the way it should have been.

Her mother should have been there to teach her about the Ancients. She needed her in her struggles. Some of the simplest things were difficult. Her classmates didn't know her true secret, but they felt it's presence and hated her for it. Why was she cursed with that?

End
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